



Forster, 1951

WDE-434

Edward William Forster, born 8 October 1884 in Jersey City, N.J., enlisted in the Navy 25 August 1919, and was warranted Machinist 25 June 1942. On 17 August 1940, he joined heavy cruiser VINCENNES (CA-44), and in her served gallantly until she was sunk in the Battle of Savo Island, 9 August 1942. Machinist Forster lost his life in this action.

WDE-434

Edsall Class Destroyer Escort

Displacement: 1,253 tons standard; 1,102 tons full load

Length: 306' oa

Beam: 36'7"

Draft: 10' 5' full load

Machinery: 2-shaft Fairbanks Morse diesels, 6,000 bhp

Range: 10,800 nm at 12 knots

Top Speed: 21 knots

Complement: 186

Armament: 3 x 3"/50; 2 x 40mm; 8 x 20mm; 3 x 21" torpedo tubes; 2 x depth charge tracks; 8 x depth charge projectors; 1 x hedge hog.

USS *Forster* (DE-334) was launched 13 November 1943 by Consolidated Steel Corp., Orange, Tex.; sponsored by Mrs. E. W. Forster, widow of Machinist Forster; and commissioned 25 January 1944. She served as an escort in the Atlantic and Mediterranean during World War II. She was decommissioned and placed in reserve at Green Cove Springs 15 June 1946.

She was turned over to the Coast Guard on 20 June 1951 and served with the nation's oldest continuous-going sea service until 25 May 1954. *Forster* (given the Coast Guard hull number WDE-434) served on ocean station duty out of Honolulu. This included duty on stations VICTOR, QUEEN, and SUGAR and voyages to Japan. She also conducted SAR duties, including finding and assisting the following vessels in distress: the M/V *Katori Maru* on 17 August 1952, assisting the M/V *Chuk Maru* on 29 August 1953, the M/V *Tongshui* on 1-3 October 1953, and the M/V *Steel Fabricator* on 26 October 1953.

She returned to reserve in naval custody until recommissioned at Long Beach, Calif., 23 October 1956.

She served in the Navy until she was transferred on 25 September 1971 to South Vietnam. The Vietnamese reclassified her as a frigate and renamed her *Tran Khanh Du* (HQ-04).

She was in a shipyard, in overhaul, when Saigon fell on 29 April 1975, and was captured by North Vietnamese forces. The U.S. Navy wrote her off as "Transferred to Vietnam, 30 April 1975." The communists renamed her *Dai Ky* (HQ-03), she apparently was still seaworthy in 1997 and was used as a training ship. By 1999, she was reduced to a training hulk.

Sources:

Jane's Fighting Ships, 1972-73," p.665; "1975-76," p.658; "1997-98," p.869; "1999-2000," p.868.

Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships, (1969) Vol. 2, p. 432.
